

Message Text

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RUEHCR/USNMR SHAPE IMMEDIATE

RUEHCR/DIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE

RUEHCR/NAVDET SOUDA BAY CRETE IMMEDIATE

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EXDIS MILITARY ADDEES HANDLE AS SPECAT EXCLUSIVE

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, NATO, GR, US

SUBJECT: SOUDA BAY

REF: A. USNATO 5771 B. STATE 253964 C. ATHENS 8272

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1. THERE ARE ESSENTIALLY FOUR PRINCIPAL ASPECTS OF THE

SOUDA BAY PROBLEM WHICH WE BELIEVE NEED TO BE ADDRESSED AS A WHOLE. THEY ARE: (A) IMMEDIATE PROBLEM POSED BY HELLENIC AIR FORCE'S PLAN TO CONSTRUCT A NEW RUNWAY WHICH WOULD THREATEN US NAVAL DETACHMENT'S USE OF THE AIR FACILITY; (B) LONGER-RANGE PROBLEM WHICH WOULD DEVELOP IF, AS SEEMS INCREASINGLY LIKELY, GREEKS DECIDE TO PUT ALL THREE SQUADRONS OF A-7'S AT SOUDA BAY RATHER THAN TWO AT SOUDA BAY AND ONE AT LARISSA; (C) US DESIRE TO RESUME FULL OPERATIONS AT SOUDA BAY AIRFIELD WHICH WERE SUSPENDED AT GREEK REQUEST DURING 1974 CYPRQS CRISIS AND WHICH WERE ONLY PARTIALLY RESUMED THIS SPRING; (D) US INTEREST IN REVISING THE 1959 AGREEMENT COVERING US USE OF SOUDA BAY AIR FACILITY. VARIOUS SIGNS OVER PAST SIX MONTHS, INCLUDING REMARKS BY CALOGERAS IN ROUND ONE OF BASE NEGOTIATIONS ABOUT "FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS," HAF PLAN TO CONSTRUCT NEW RUNWAY, AND EVIDENCE HAF INTENDS TO STATION ALL THREE SQUADRONS OF A-7'S AT SOUDA BAY, ALL SEEM TO INDICATE GREEKS ARE TRYING

TO PUT SQUEEZE ON US. THEY ARE AWARE OF IMPORTANCE TO US OF SOUDA BAY, AND THEY APPARENTLY FEEL THEY CAN PUT US IN POSITION WHERE, TO KEEP THE US NAVY DETACHMENT IN PLACE, WE WILL AGREE TO BEAR THE COSTS OF BUILDING A FOURTH FACILITY AT SOUDA BAY AB TO HOUSE THE THIRD A-7 SQUADRON. WE BELIEVE THAT TIME HAS COME FOR US TO MAKE CLEAR WE ARE NOT PREPARED TO PLAY THAT GAME.

2. FOR ATHENS: YOU SHOULD SEEK A PRIVATE MEETING WITH DEFENSE MINISTER AVEROF AT EARLIEST OPPORTUNITY TO CONVEY FOLLOWING POINTS: (A) WE HAVE JUST LEARNED THAT HAF PLANS TO CONSTRUCT A NEW RUNWAY AT SOUDA BAY WHICH WOULD INTERFERE WITH OPERATIONS OF US NAVY DETACHMENT; (B) WE ARE DISTURBED BY LACK OF PRIOR CONSULTATION BY HAF IN VIEW OF IMPACT ON US NAVY FACILITIES; (C) CONSTRUCTION WOULD BE CONTRARY BOTH TO NATO INFRASTRUCTURE RULES AND TO OCTOBER 9 STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR THEODOROPOULOS TO NORTH ATLANTIC COUNCIL, I.E. "NATO COMMON INFRASTRUCTURE INSTALLATIONS SHALL, BY COMMON AGREEMENT, CONTINUE TO BE AVAILABLE FOR THE PURPOSE FOR WHICH THEY WERE CONSTRUCTED;" (D) IF CONSTRUCTION OF NEW RUNWAY PROCEEDS, IT WILL BECOME A SUBJECT FOR DISCUSSION IN NATO; AND (E) WE WOULD APPRECIATE DEFENSE

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MINISTER'S PERSONALLY LOOKING INTO THIS MATTER AND CONSIDERING, AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO NEW RUNWAY, WHETHER EXISTING TAXIWAY COULD BE WIDENED AND STRENGTHENED.

3. WE SUGGEST YOU DRAW FROM FOLLOWING ON POSSIBILITY OF GREEKS' STATIONING THIRD A-7 SQUADRON AT SOUDA BAY: (A) WE HAVE UNDERSTOOD THAT HAF HAS PLANNED TO STATION TWO SQUADRONS OF A-7'S AT SOUDA BAY AND ONE AT LARISSA; (B) IF THAT

IS STILL HAF PLAN, LETTER OF ACCEPTANCE FOR GROUND SUPPORT EQUIPMENT AT LARISSA SHOULD BE SIGNED IMMEDIATELY TO INSURE DELIVERY NOT LATER THAN 1977; (C) IF, ON OTHER HAND, HAF PLANS TO ASSIGN ALL 60 A-7'S AT SOUDA BAY, WE WOULD APPRECIATE LEARNING HOW GOG INTENDS TO FINANCE CONSTRUCTION OF NEW FACILITIES TO ACCOMMODATE THIRD SQUADRON; (D) AS SOUDA BAY WAS ORIGINALLY CONSTRUCTED WITH NATO INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDS, CONSTRUCTION OF NEW FACILITIES THERE WOULD NORMALLY BE FINANCED FROM SAME SOURCE, BUT NATO INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDS WOULD NOT NOW APPEAR TO BE AVAILABLE, GIVEN GREECE'S PRESENT STATUS IN NATO; (E) ONE ALTERNATIVE WOULD BE FOR THE GOG TO MAKE PRE-FINANCING ARRANGEMENTS WITH NATO AND THEN SEEK REIMBURSEMENT FROM NATO INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDS AS SOON AS THE GREEK-NATO RELATIONSHIP PERMITS; AND (F) WE WOULD BE PREPARED TO SUPPORT ANY GREEK EFFORT ALONG THESE LINES, BUT USG WILL NOT REPEAT NOT BE RESPONSIBLE FOR COSTS AT SOUDA

BAY BEYOND THOSE PERTAINING DIRECTLY TO US USE.

4. ON US NAVY'S FUTURE USE OF SOUDA BAY, (A) YOU SHOULD INFORM AVEROF THAT WE CONTINUE TO REGARD THIS FACILITY AS AN ESSENTIAL BASE TO SUPPORT SIXTH FLEET MISSIONS IN EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN; (B) WE UNDERSTAND GOG AGREES THAT THESE MISSIONS SERVE GREEK DEFENSE PURPOSES; (C) WE BELIEVE TPME HAS COME FOR GOG TO LIFT REMAINING RESTRICTIONS ON OUR OPERATIONS AT SOUDA AB AND TO ALLOW US AGAIN TO USE FACILITY ACCORDING TO THE EXISTING 1959 AGREEMENT; (D) WE ARE STILL STRONGLY INTERESTED IN REVISING THIS AGREEMENT (TO PERMIT EXPANDED USE BY US NAVY OF THIS FACILITY) AND WE WILL BE GLAD TO DISCUSS WITH AMBASSADOR CALOGERAS THE BEST METHOD FOR RESUMING THE NEGOTIATIONS WHICH BEGAN IN SECRET

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1973 AND WERE BROKEN OFF NEAR THE END OF THE MILITARY RULE IN 1974.

5. FINALLY, IN WHATEVER WORDS YOU CONSIDER APPROPRIATE, WE BELIEVE YOU SHOULD REMIND AVEROF WE ARE NOW IN PROCESS OF DEVELOPING AN ECONOMIC AND MILITARY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM WHICH WE HOPE WILL GO A LONG WAYS IN MEETING GREECE'S NEED IN THESE FIELDS. WE ARE FORMULATING THIS PROGRAM NOT ONLY BECAUSE WE WISH TO SUPPORT GREECE IN ITS ROLE AS A NATO ALLY, BUT ALSO WE WANT TO DO EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO STRENGTHEN THE FOUNDATIONS OF DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT IN GREECE. IT HAS NEVER BEEN OUR INTENTION TO MAKE A DIRECT CONNECTION BETWEEN ASSISTANCE AND FACILITIES OFFERED TO US BY THE GREEK GOVERNMENT. AT SAME TIME, IT WOULD BE ANOMALOUS IF WE WERE TO STRENGTHEN GREECE'S ARMED FORCES WHILE

GREECE WAS ACTING IN WAY WHICH TENDED TO WEAKEN THE DEFENSE POSITION OF THE US AND OF NATO IN THE MEDITERRANEAN. THEREFORE, WE STRONGLY HOPE THAT THE GREEK GOVERNMENT WILL SHOW UNDERSTANDING OF OUR VIEWS ON SOUDA BAY.

6. FOR USNATO: WE PREFER TO MAKE THIS DIRECT APPROACH IN ATHENS FIRST AND TO HOLD POSSIBLE NATO APPROACH IN RESERVE. ACCORDINGLY, YOU SHOULD LIMIT YOUR ACTIONS TO BILATERAL APPROACH TO GREEK DELEGATION PER PARA 4, REFTEL A. IN ADDITION TO EXPRESSING CONCERN OVER IMPLICATIONS IN NATO OF RUNWAY CONSTRUCTION, YOU MAY ALSO DRAW ON GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS IN PARA 5 ABOVE. KISSINGER

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